

I. LEAGUE INFORMATION:	2
II. PLAYING RULES:	2
III. TEAMS:	8
IV. PLAYER ELIGIBILITY:	9
V. AGE CLASSIFICATION:	9
VI. MUST PLAY RULE:	10
VII. TOURNAMENT PLAY:	10
VIII. PROTESTS:	11
IX. CODE OF CONDUCT:	11
X. SUSPENSIONS:	12



Mecklenburg County Youth Sports Philosophy: *To provide an environment for children to learn the fundamentals of sport while emphasizing the importance of teamwork, sportsmanship, physical fitness and fair play.*

I. LEAGUE INFORMATION

- A. **GENERAL INFORMATION:** The program shall be known as the Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation Department's Youth Fall Flag Football League.
- B. **REGISTRATION:** Registration will be held in July and will run for a minimum of four weeks. Participants may register at any recreation center, or online at www.parkandrec.com by clicking on the Eparks logo. Specific questions may be directed to the Revolution Park Sports Academy at (980) 314-1116 or emailed to the Youth Sports Development Staff at YouthSports@MecklenburgCountyNC.gov.
- C. **LENGTH OF SEASON:** The regular season will run for approximately eight (8) weeks to encompass the eight (8) scheduled regular season games. Teams may be required to participate in "double headers" (whereby two games may be scheduled for the same day) in an effort to avoid off or "bye" weeks. A single elimination post season tournament will immediately follow the regular season. ***Exception: 6U and 8U teams do not compete in a post season tournament***

II. PLAYING RULES

- A. All games will be governed by the **NFL FLAG REGULAR SEASON RULE BOOK** and the Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation Department's local rule modifications, as mentioned below. These rules must be strictly adhered to by all staff, officials, coaches, teams, participants, parents and spectators. **The Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation Department reserves the right to modify league play rules to accommodate and or enhance the overall experience and/or service being provided.** For more information about or to view the **NFL FLAG REGULAR SEASON RULE BOOK** please visit https://www.nflflag.com/pdf/NFL_FLAG_Regular_Season_Rule_Book_2016.pdf.
- B. **GENERAL RULES OF THE GAME**
 - 1. **Starting and Stopping Play:** A coin toss will determine the 1st offensive/defensive possession and direction of play (teams may not defer choice for the second half). To begin play, the offensive team will start from their own five (5) yard line and have four (4) plays to cross midfield. Once a team crosses midfield, they will have four (4) plays to score a touchdown. If the offense fails to score, the ball changes possession and the new offense will start its drive from their own five (5) yard line. All possession changes (except interceptions) will start from the five (5) yard line. Each play will begin with a snap from the center to the quarterback. The center may choose to snap the ball between the legs or from the side. Stoppages in play may occur on the following: time outs, penalties, fouls or infractions, out of bounds and incomplete passes, etc. There are no fumbles; therefore, the ball will be spotted at the position of the ball carrier's feet at the time of dispossession.
 - 2. **Formations:** The offense must have a minimum of one (1) player on the line of scrimmage (the center) and a maximum of four (4). Only one player may go in motion parallel to the line of scrimmage (motion towards the line of scrimmage is prohibited) (**prohibited in 5-6 age group – new in 2017**). Offensive players

(excluding the player in motion) must come to a complete stop for one (1) second before the snap. Movement by a player who is set or motion towards the line of scrimmage while in motion is considered a false start.

3. **Blocking:** An offensive player may not impede the progress of any defensive player by occupying the path of pursuit with a "moving player". It is the responsibility of the offensive "moving player" to avoid contact with the rusher. The offensive player may occupy a specific space as a "stationary player" as long as they have both feet planted on the ground and hands are down in front, to the side or in back. The rusher is responsible for avoiding contact with a "stationary player" on offense if he or she is not moving. Moving the feet or hands in the direction of the rusher in an attempt to redirect their path to the quarterback or ball carrier is prohibited and considered illegal blocking. Offensive players are also prohibited from running in front of, beside or behind the ball carrier.
4. **Scoring:**
Touchdowns - 6 points
PAT (Point After Touchdown) - 1 point (5-yard line) or 2 points (12-yard line)
*(Interceptions on PATs cannot be returned and are whistled dead)
Safety - 2 points
(A safety occurs when a ball carrier is declared down in his or her end zone.)
5. **Running the Ball:** The ball is spotted down where the runner's feet are when the flag is pulled. The quarterback cannot advance the ball beyond the line of scrimmage by running it ("quarterback" is defined by the person who receives the snap). Pitches, laterals and handoffs (single or multiple) may only occur behind the line of scrimmage. Players who receive handoffs may throw the ball down field. Runners may not leave their feet (i.e. jump, dive, lunge) to avoid a flag pull or to advance the ball. Spinning is allowed, but players may only leave their feet to avoid contact with another player to avoid a flag guarding penalty. "NO RUN ZONES", located five (5) yards before each end zone and five (5) yards on either side of midfield, are designed to avoid short-yardage power-running situations. **Running the ball is prohibited during plays originating from within these zones (ages 7-8 and 9-10). "No run zones" are not in effect for the 5-6 age group (new in 2017).**
6. **Passing and Receiving:** All forward passes, including shovel passes, must be thrown from behind the line of scrimmage and received beyond the line of scrimmage. ***Please note that forward passes differ from back-field laterals and pitches.** The quarterback has a seven (7) second "pass clock" (official's discretion). If a pass is not thrown within the seven (7) seconds, the play is whistled dead, the down is consumed and the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage. All players are eligible to receive passes, including the quarterback (*if the ball has been handed off/pitched behind the line of scrimmage). Only one player is allowed to be in motion at a time. A player must have at least one foot in bounds when making a catch. In the case of simultaneous possession, possession will stay with

the offense. Interceptions will change possession at the point of the catch and can be advanced.

7. **Rushing the Passer:** Players who rush the passer must be a minimum of seven (7) yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped (officials will use a special marker to indicate the "rush line"). Defensive players are responsible for checking their positioning. **Any number of players may rush in the 7-8 and 9-10 age group. Only one (1) pass rusher is allowed in the 5-6 age group (new in 2017).** If a rushing player leaves the "rush line" prior to the snap, he or she may return to the "rush line", reset and rush legally. Rushing players may attempt to block a pass; however, contact with the quarterback is prohibited. Players not rushing may defend from the line of scrimmage. Once a ball has been handed off, pitched or lateraled, all defensive players are eligible to proceed with pursuit into the back field.
8. **Flag Pulling:** A legal flag pull takes place when a ball carrier is in full possession of the ball. Defensive players may not intentionally pull flags off of a player who is not in possession of the ball. **Defenders may not dive, trip, tackle, hold or run through the ball carrier when pulling flags.** Stripping or attempting to strip the ball is illegal. A player is downed if his or her flag falls off inadvertently. Flag guarding (an attempt by the ball carrier to obstruct the defender's access to the flags by stiff arming, dropping the head, hand, arm or shoulder, or covering the flags with the jersey) is illegal.
9. **Unsportsmanlike Conduct:** Players who engage in direct or intentional physical contact such as stiff arming, tackling, elbowing, shouldering, pushing, shoving or over-aggressive play will be subject to immediate ejection from the game (official's discretion). This will also include anyone engaging in profanity, verbal abuse, badgering or taunting of officials, coaches, staff, parents, players, etc. **(SEE THE "ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY" UNDER THE RULES SECTION LABELED IX. CODE OF CONDUCT).**
10. **Penalties:** The official will call all penalties. Incidental contact resulting from the normal run of play is to be evaluated, allowed and or penalized at the discretion of the official. All penalties will be assessed from the LOS (Line of Scrimmage) except noted SPOT FOULS. Penalties will be assessed at half the distance to the goal yardage when the penalty yardage is more than half the distance to the goal. **Only the Head Coach may address officials for rule clarification and interpretation.** Players are prohibited from questioning judgment calls. Games may not end on a defensive penalty unless the offense declines it.
Coaches reserve the right to decline penalties called on behalf of or in favor of their team.
11. **Defensive Penalties**
**LOS (Line of Scrimmage)*
**SPOT FOUL (Yardage loss or gain is assessed from the spot of the penalty and not the line of scrimmage)*

- a. **Offside** **LOS**, +5 yards & Automatic First Down
 - b. **Pass Interference** **SPOT FOUL**, Automatic First Down
 - c. **Holding** **SPOT FOUL**, Automatic First Down
 - d. **Illegal Flag Pull** **LOS** (before the player has the ball) +5 yards & Automatic First Down
 - e. **Illegal Rush** **LOS** (starting from inside the 7-yard marker) +5 yards & Automatic First Down
 - f. **Roughing the Passer** **LOS** +10 yards & Automatic First Down
 - g. **Stripping** **SPOT FOUL** +10 yards & Automatic First Down
 - h. **Unnecessary Roughness** **SPOT FOUL** +10 yards & Automatic First Down
12. **Offensive Penalties**
- ***LOS** (Line of Scrimmage)
 - ***SPOT FOUL** (Yardage loss or gain is assessed from the spot of the penalty and not the line of scrimmage)
 - a. **False Start** **LOS**, -5 yards from LOS & Loss of Down
 - b. **Illegal Motion** (more than one person moving) **LOS**, -5 yards from LOS & Loss of Down
 - c. **Pass Interference** **LOS**, -5 yards from LOS & Loss of Down
 - d. **Illegal Forward Pass** (Any pass received or lands behind the line of scrimmage or throwing a pass after crossing the line of scrimmage) **LOS**, -5 yards from LOS & Loss of Down
 - e. **Illegal Flag Pull** **LOS**, -5 yards from LOS & Loss of Down
 - f. **Delay of Game** **LOS**, -5 yards from LOS & Loss of Down
 - g. **Screening, Blocking, or Running with the Ball Carrier** **LOS**, -5 yards from LOS & Loss of Down
 - h. **Charging** **SPOT FOUL** -10 yards & Loss of Down
 - i. **Flag Guarding** **SPOT FOUL** -10 yards & Loss of Down
 - j. **Unnecessary Roughness** **SPOT FOUL** -10 yards & Loss of Down

C. INSTRUCTIONAL DIVISION (4, 5 & 6 YEAR OLDS)

- 1. **FIELD DIMENSIONS/MARKINGS:**
Width: Approximately 30 yards (90')
Length: Approximately 70 yards (210')
- 2. **BALL:** Size "PEE-WEE".
- 3. **ROSTER:** Each roster should contain a minimum of 8 and maximum of 12 players to ensure quality instruction opportunities. Teams may field a maximum of 6 players. There are no forfeits. **It is recommended by the Athletic Office in situations with extremely low participant numbers for one or both teams to implement a "scrimmage game" whereby players may temporarily play with opposing teams/players to avoid game cancellations.*
- 4. **LENGTH OF GAME:** Each game shall consist of two twenty (20) minute halves with a five (5) minute halftime.
- 5. **CLOCK:** The game clock will run continuously stopping only for timeouts and at the discretion of the official for extenuating circumstances: (Ex. Severe injury, unsafe item on field, etc.)

6. **TIME OUTS:** Each team will have one (1) sixty-second and one (1) thirty-second time out per half.
7. **SUBSTITUTIONS:** Substitutions can be made during any of the following dead ball situations:
 - a. Ball carrier's flag is pulled
 - b. Ball carrier's flag falls off
 - c. Ball carrier steps out of bounds
 - d. Touchdown or safety is scored
 - e. Ball carrier's knee is down
 - f. The ball thrown and contacts the ground

D. INSTRUCTIONAL DIVISION (7 & 8 YEAR OLDS)

1. **FIELD DIMENSIONS/MARKINGS:**
Width: Approximately 30 yards (90')
Length: Approximately 70 yards (210')
2. **BALL:** Size "PEE-WEE"
3. **ROSTER:** Each roster should contain a minimum of 8 and maximum of 10 players. Teams may field a maximum of 5 players. Teams are permitted to compete with a minimum of 4 players. There are no forfeits.
**It is recommended by the Athletic Office in situations with extremely low participant numbers for one or both teams to implement a "scrimmage game" whereby players may temporarily play with opposing teams/players to avoid game cancellations.*
4. **LENGTH OF GAME:** Each game shall consist of two (20) twenty-minute halves with a five (5) minute halftime.
5. **CLOCK:** The game clock will run continuously stopping only for timeouts and at the discretion of the official for extenuating circumstances: (Ex. Severe injury, unsafe item on field, etc.)
6. **TIME OUTS:** Each team will have one (1) sixty-second and one (1) thirty-second time out per half.
7. **SUBSTITUTIONS:** Substitutions can be made during any of the following dead ball situations:
 - a. Ball carrier's flag is pulled
 - b. Ball carrier's flag falls off
 - c. Ball carrier steps out of bounds
 - d. Touchdown or safety is scored
 - e. Ball carrier's knee is down
 - f. The ball is thrown and contacts the ground

E. RECREATIONAL DIVISION (9 & 10 YEAR OLDS)

1. **FIELD DIMENSIONS/MARKINGS:**
Width: Approximately 30 yards (90')
Length: Approximately 70 yards (210')
2. **BALL:** Size "Junior"
3. **ROSTER:** Each roster should contain a minimum of 8 and maximum of 10 players. Teams may field a maximum of 5 players. Teams are permitted to compete with a minimum of 4 players.
4. **LENGTH OF GAME:** Each game shall consist of two twenty (20) minute halves with

- a five (5) minute halftime.
5. **CLOCK:** The game clock will run continuously stopping only for timeouts and at the discretion of the official for extenuating circumstances (Ex. Severe injury, unsafe item on field, etc.) until the last two minutes of the game. The game clock will stop on all dead ball situations (out of bounds, incomplete passes, etc.) in the last two minutes of the game.
 6. **TIME OUTS:** Each team will have one (1) sixty-second and one (1) thirty-second time out per half.
 7. **SUBSTITUTIONS:** Substitutions can be made during any of the following dead ball situations:
 - g. Ball carrier's flag is pulled
 - h. Ball carrier's flag falls off
 - i. Ball carrier steps out of bounds
 - j. Touchdown or safety is scored
 - k. Ball carrier's knee is down
 - l. The ball is thrown and contacts the ground

F. GENERAL RULE MODIFICATIONS

1. **SCORING:** Scoring will not be kept in the 5-6 and 7-8 Instructional Division. Score will be kept in the 9-10 Recreation Division and older and game officials will report scores to site supervisors directly following the games.
- a. **MERCY RULE:** Any team taking a lead of 21 points will be required to pass on each possession (run plays are prohibited until the lead drops below 21 points).
2. **COACHES:** Each team must be led by a certified NYSCA coach.
3. **BENCH/SIDELINE PERSONEL:** A maximum of three bench personnel will be permitted in the bench area. This may include coaches and/or a team manager. For the 10u division and older, it may also include a statistician. All other team personnel must remain inside the designated spectator areas. Only Mecklenburg County approved volunteers may reside in the bench or player area. Each approved volunteer must be issued an ID Badge by his or her respective center staff and have it available to present to staff each game day.
4. **WARM UP:** On field warm up time will not be scheduled. Teams may utilize the field for warm up time once the previous game has concluded. Games will begin promptly at their scheduled time.
5. **GRACE PERIODS:** There is a ten (10) minute grace period that will be allowed **only** for the first scheduled game of the day. Each game after the first scheduled game of the day is expected to begin as scheduled.
6. **OFFICIAL TIME/CLOCK:** Park and Recreation Staff will have the official game start time. All officials should check with staff to verify time before decisions are made in regards to forfeits or grace periods. Once the game has begun, timing should be kept by the field official. Clock stoppages will only occur in the event of an injury or other extenuating circumstances.
7. **OVERTIME & SUDDEN DEATH:** During the regular season for the 10u age division and older, in the event of a tied score at the end of regulation play, overtime play will begin. A coin toss conducted by the official will determine the beginning possession and end zone preference. Each team will begin possession on the 12 yard line. Teams will alternate possessions for two (2) drives (if necessary). If the

score remains tied after the second series of drives for each team, "Sudden Death" overtime will begin with a coin toss conducted by the official to determine the beginning possession at the 12 yard line, and end zone preference. The first team to score in "Sudden Death" overtime will win. The score at the end of the overtime period or "Sudden Death" will be submitted as the final score.

8. **GAME SCHEDULING & MAKE UPS:** Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation Department reserves the right to schedule games when needed as a result of cancellations due to inclement weather or to accommodate playoff games/tournament play. Teams should be aware that playing games on weekday evenings or weekend mornings and/or evenings is always a possibility. In the event of multiple rain outs, Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation reserves the right to cancel make up games in an effort to avoid extending the season excessively. This is solely at the discretion of the department staff.
9. **INCLEMENT WEATHER HOTLINE:** In case of INCLEMENT WEATHER, please call (704) 432-3834 **after 4pm on weekdays & after 8am on weekends** for an update on game conditions and status. Secondly, for additional information, you may call the Recreation Center or site where your games are to be played.
10. **ADA COMPLIANCE:** In order to comply with the American Disabilities Act, league rules may be adapted in order for participation. An "ADA Exception Form" will be submitted prior to beginning of play, and approved by Karla Gray, Therapeutics Division Director, and the Youth Sports Development staff, and kept on file to verify changes of rules.

III. TEAMS

- A. All teams and participants must abide by all rules and regulations of Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation Department, which govern participation in the League's organized under its jurisdiction.
- B. **EQUIPMENT:** Each team will provide a minimum of one game ball per game. Teams will use their own ball while on offense. Rubber/molded cleats or turf shoes are permitted. **Hard plastic or metal cleats are prohibited.**
- C. **PERSONAL SAFETY EQUIPMENT:** Each youth flag football participant is required to wear a protective mouthpiece during practice and game play. Participants are also required to wear a flag belt during game play. Participants are strongly encouraged to wear an athletic supporter, cup, groin pad or combination of those items during all practices and games to decrease the risk of serious injury.
HAIR ACCESSORIES: Participants with hair accessories such as bows and/or beads made of plastic or any other hardened material (non-fabric) must be removed prior to participation being permitted.
- D. **UNIFORMS:** During competition, all teams are required to wear uniforms consisting of the same or similar colored shirt. Jerseys or shirts should be printed with at least 6 inch numbers on the back. *All jerseys will remain tucked in as not to interfere with the exposed flags on their belts.* Officials may Players failing to meet the uniform requirements will be ineligible to play. Temporary uniform modifications are prohibited: No taped-on or written-on numbers. **Due to seasonal weather extremes, under shirts (long sleeve) and pants will be permitted without color requirements.*
- E. **TEAM PHOTO ID SHEET:** All teams in the 10u age division or older must submit an official

Team Photo ID sheet. The sheet must be verified by the Facility Manager of that center or the athletic director of the independent organization, prior to playing the 1st game of the season. A photo, name and date of birth must be stated for every player on the ID sheet. Each team manager/coach must have a copy of their Team Photo ID Sheet at each game and ensure that the opposing team manager/coach has verified them, at least ten (10) minutes prior to the scheduled game start time. Photo ID sheets may be subject to inspection by Field Supervisors at any time. ***Exception: 5-6 and 7-8 INSTRUCTIONAL TEAMS***

- F. **BIRTH CERTIFICATES:** All players are required to provide a valid birth certificate or other approved legal document showing proof of age. This document must be verified by staff in order to establish eligibility. Players with driver's licenses may use them.
- G. **FORFEITS:** In the 10u age division and older, each team must be ready to play with the minimum required number of players on site at their scheduled game time. In the event a team is unable to produce the minimum number of players to begin the game, the result is a forfeit by that team with a score reported as 28-0 in favor of the winning team. In the event both teams are unable to produce the required number of players to begin the game, then both teams will receive a forfeit (double forfeit 28-28) and a loss will be applied to both team's record for the purposes of the league standings. If a team forfeits three (3) games in a season, they will be subject to dismissal from the league, pending review of the incidents by the Youth Flag Football Focus Team and Athletic Office. ***The Park and Recreation Staff reserves the right to overrule an official's decision regarding a forfeit regarding extenuating circumstances.**
- H. **VOLUNTEER COACHES:** All Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation Department volunteer sports coaches must complete the following requirements prior to assuming their role:
 - 1. Each volunteer must apply and receive approval as a youth sports coach through the online process located at the following link
<https://volunteerweb.mecklenburgcountync.gov/>
 - 2. Each volunteer coach must sign the Coaches Code of Ethics
 - 3. Each Head Coach will be required to complete training and receive certification through the National Alliance for Youth Sports (NAYS). This online training can be scheduled by the staff at your respective recreation center. Although only the head coach is required, it is recommended by the Youth Sports Development Team that all coaches receive training and certification <http://www.nays.org/Coaches/>
 - 4. Each coach must thoroughly read and become familiar with the respective rules for their sport including but not limited to the Mecklenburg County Youth Sports Philosophy, league rules, policies, procedures and **Code of Conduct**

IV. PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

- A. **INELIGIBLE PLAYERS:** Participants can play on only one (1) team within the Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation league structure. Any player listed on multiple rosters or participating on multiple teams will be found to be ineligible immediately. All teams which the ineligible player is found to be listed on the roster of will be subject to forcible forfeit of all games found in violation pending an investigation. An ineligible player will be subject to suspension, pending review of incident(s). Any team manager/ coach knowingly or willingly



playing a suspended or ineligible player will be suspended for 1 calendar year.

V. AGE CLASSIFICATION

- A. **CUT OFF DATE:** Age Classifications are determined by the participant's calculated age as of September 1st, 2017. The following is a list of the offered age divisions.
1. (CO-ED INSTRUCTIONAL) Ages 5 and 6
 2. (CO-ED INSTRUCTIONAL) Ages 7 and 8
 3. (CO-ED RECREATIONAL) Ages 9 and 10
- B. **PLAY UP POLICY:** Participants registering in Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation Department Youth Sport Programs are strongly recommended to register within their corresponding pre-determined age group according to their chronological age as determined by the "cut off" date. In the event that a parent or guardian feels that their child would benefit greatly from participating in a higher age division, which is not recommended, the department acknowledges the request and will accommodate the parent/guardian by approving the "Play Up" request for participants moving up by ***one (1) Year of Age only***. A Play Up Release of Liability and Assumption of Risk Agreement should be signed by a legal guardian and stored on file at the respective facility, as well as a copy submitted to the Athletic Staff.

VI. MUST PLAY RULE

- A. ALL DIVISIONS will abide by the "MUST PLAY" Rule. Coaches must monitor and manage the playing time of all players on his/her team. Maximum participation is encouraged for all participants
- B. **INSTRUCTIONAL:** All players must play a minimum of 1 half or 2 quarters.
- C. **RECREATIONAL:** All players must play a minimum of 1 half or 2 quarters.

VII. TOURNAMENT PLAY – 9-10 RECREATIONAL DIVISION ONLY

- A. **CLOCK:** The game clock will run continuously stopping only for timeouts and at the discretion of the official for extenuating circumstances (Ex. Severe injury, unsafe item on field, etc.) until the last two minutes of the game. The game clock will stop on all dead ball situations (out of bounds, incomplete passes, etc.) in the last two minutes of the game.
- B. **TEAM SELECTION:** A sliding scale will be used to select teams for the Countywide Tournament (see table below).

# TEAMS PARTICIPATING IN REGULAR SEASON LEAGUE	# TEAMS ADVANCING TO COUNTYWIDE TOURNAMENT
9-10 TEAMS	TOP 6
7-8 TEAMS	TOP 5
5-6 TEAMS	TOP 4
4 TEAMS	TOP 3

- C. The top teams in each league with the best regular season record will advance to the Countywide Tournament. Seeding will be determined by the regular season standings. In the event of a tie between two (2) or more teams, tournament seeding will be determined by

the following tie-breakers:

1. Head to head record
2. Fewest defensive points (allowed) against each other
3. Fewest total defensive points (allowed) against all opponents in the regular season
4. Coin toss with heads and tails being assigned by the staff tossing the coin

VIII. PROTESTS

PROTESTS: PROTESTS WILL NOT BE HONORED Discrepancies about participant age should be resolved by staff on site utilizing the Photo ID Sheet provided.

A. CONFLICT RESOLUTION / CHAIN OF COMMAND:

If a conflict arises & no decision is rendered by the onsite Athletic Assistant Staff, then the on-call Focus Team member must be contacted to make the final decision. Order of decision making:

1. Game Officials: Govern play on the field, court, etc.
2. Facility/AA Staff: Provide onsite administrative checkpoints for rule modifications, paperwork and scorekeeping
3. Focus Team On Duty: Oversees countywide game day operations and address issues/concerns
4. Youth Sports Development Staff: Oversees league administration

IX. CODE OF CONDUCT

- A. **ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY:** MCPRD POSSESSES A **ZERO TOLERANCE** POLICY FOR COACHES, PLAYERS, PARENTS & SPECTATORS WITH REGARD TO INAPPROPRIATE CONDUCT.
- B. **COACHING STAFF:** All Coaches are RESPONSIBLE for the eligibility of all players, as well as the conduct of any team player(s), spectator(s), and other team affiliated persons. All team-affiliated persons previously mentioned must conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner when involved in any Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation Department's youth athletic programs. This rule applies to conduct on all MECKLENBURG COUNTY PARK PROPERTY before, during, and after scheduled games. Suspension of entire teams, coaches, individual players and other team-affiliated persons may occur if any eligibility and/or conduct guidelines/procedures are not adhered to. Coaches are expected to adhere to Volunteer Services Policy regarding conduct.
- C. **INCIDENT PROCEDURES:** Individuals in question or suspected of violating conduct will be asked to provide a written statement regarding the details of the incident in question, as well as their involvement or participation in said incident by 5:00pm of the following Wednesday to a Youth Sports Development Team member. Failure to provide a written statement is viewed as an admission of guilt and will be grounds for suspension.
- D. **COMMUNICATION WITH OFFICIALS:** **ONLY HEAD COACHES** will be permitted to consult with the UMPIRE/OFFICIAL and this **MUST BE DONE IN A SPORTSMANLIKE MANNER.** It is in the best interest of head coaches to approach umpires/officials with courtesy, respect and in the presence of staff whenever possible.

Penalty: EJECTION - Immediate removal from the facility and will receive a minimum 2 game suspension for the 1st offense and a one (1) year suspension from the point of infraction for any 2nd offense. The ejected coach may not enter the facility until the end of

the suspension as a coach or spectator. Ejected person must leave the grounds. (RULE C UNDER "SUSPENSIONS" WILL APPLY WHEREVER DEEMED NECESSARY).

- E. **PLAYER DISSENT:** Players will not be permitted to question or consult with the Officials over judgment calls. Unsportsmanlike conduct or dissent toward an Official is strictly prohibited.
Penalty: EJECTION – Immediate removal from the facility and a two (2) game suspension.
- F. **DISSENT:** If a team, coach or participant attempt to delay, hinder or prevent the start of or completion of a game in protest, the team, coach or participant may be subject to a disciplinary suspension for up to one (1) year from the date of the infraction.
- G. **ABUSIVE BEHAVIOR:** Players, Coaches, and other team-affiliated persons must not threaten, verbally abuse, use profanity/vulgar language or make physical contact of an aggressive nature with any other player(s), Coaches, Park and recreation Staff or Official(s).
Penalty: EJECTION – Immediate removal from the facility & suspended for minimum of one (1) calendar year from the date of the infraction.
- H. **CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES:** Absolutely no one (players or coaches) will be permitted to participate in Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation Department activities under the influence of alcohol. Nor shall they possess or use any controlled substance before, during or after their scheduled game(s) on County property. **Penalty:** EJECTION – Immediate removal from the facility & suspended for minimum of one (1) calendar year from the date of the infraction.
- I. **SPECTATORS:** If spectators and/or affiliated persons' conduct become overly unruly & unsportsmanlike during the course of the game, the MCPRD staff & game officials reserve the authority to empty the facility & allow only coaches & players to remain, in the effort to finish game play in a safe and controlled environment. **Penalty:** EJECTION – Immediate removal from the facility & minimum two (2) game suspension.

X. SUSPENSIONS

- A. All ejections will carry an automatic two (2) game suspension. This includes players, coaches and spectators.
- B. Any Players, Coaches or Spectators who are suspended from league play will be ineligible for league play as a player, coach, or spectator for the duration of their suspension.
- C. Any violation while under suspension will be treated as a 2nd offense and all penalties will apply, including extending existing suspension.
- D. Any suspension occurring with less than two games remaining in any league play will result in suspension from league play including tournament play, from the verified date of infraction, pending review of the Youth Flag Football Focus Team.
- E. Any suspension for one 1 year or more will require a written request for reinstatement. The Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation Department reserves the right to deny reinstatement and/or extend any and all suspensions.

For more information about the youth sports programs in Mecklenburg County, please contact your nearest Recreation Center or contact Revolution Park Sports Academy at (980) 314-1116 or email YouthSports@MecklenburgCountyNC.gov.



Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation Department encourages and promotes inclusive leisure experiences in all of our programs, activities and sports. Inclusive leisure experiences encourage and enhance opportunities for people of varying abilities to participate and interact in life's activities together with dignity. It also provides an environment that promotes and fosters physical, social and psychological inclusion of people with diverse experiences and skill levels. Inclusion enhances individuals' potential for full and active participation in leisure activities and experiences.